

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION WASHINGTON, D. C.

33RD YEAR

October 4, 1976

NO.40

SCHOOL LUNCH CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

On October 9, 1962, the Congress designated the 7-day period beginning the second Sunday of each year as National School Lunch Week. Every year since then, people of the United States have been called upon to observe the week with ceremonies and activities in an effort to let the public know what the program is all about and its nutritional benefits.

This year's festivities -- October 10 through 16 -- will be highlighted by the traditional serving of the "Universal Menu" in all participating schools on the Wednesday of National School Lunch Week. This year's menu features the "All-American Circus" theme and includes "Ring Master's Vegetable Beef Soup, Hot Dog on a Bun, Side-Show Orange Wedges, Happy Clown Tutti-Fruitti Crisp, and Midway Milk".

During the Bicentennial celebration, monthly menus have emphasized our Nation's heritage. Schools participating in the Bicentennial lunch project by serving special menus have received a pennant to hang in their school. This project is being jointly sponsored by USDA, the American School Food Service Association (ASDSA), and State Departments of Education.

Bicentennial certificates were awarded at the ASFSA annual meeting to over 1200 people who have devoted their life to feeding children. During National School Lunch Week, many States will hold similar ceremonies honoring these people.

The "You Are What You Eat" circus animals from past school lunch weeks will be the cast for a series of animated television PSA's during National School Lunch Week.

As part of the birthday celebration school board members and community leaders have been invited to participate in the program.

In This Issue:

- 1 - School Lunch Anniversary
- 2 - Bicentennial Photos
- 3 - Food Habits:
- 4 - Changing Lifestyles

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

'You Are What You Eat'



CELEBRATE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK OCTOBER 10 - 16



A Winchester, Virginia kitchen -- 1919

Photo # BN 44256



A demonstration of an electric dishwasher -- 1930's

Photo # BN 38966

CHANGING LIFESTYLES

...CHANGING FOOD HABITS

It's a new food, Mom! If your youngster heard about it or saw it on television he was probably right...it is a new food. Supermarkets have new food items more often than you might imagine. Most consumers have no idea how many new products enter the marketplace each year -- In 1973 alone, food companies introduced 7,200 new products to consumers. Sometimes these products are modifications of other products, but, often the new products actually are "brand new".

What do companies aim for when introducing a new product? Superior convenience is one consideration and then there is quality (better, according to tests, than products already on the market) superior taste, freshness, availability, and variety over what currently is available in the marketplace. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture reports, consumer demand for highly processed foods results from rising incomes, growing negative attitude toward food preparation, and our changing lifestyles. And -- according to industry, new products contribute to employment and economic growth.

Consumer response in the market place is mixed. Yearly sales value of frozen TV dinners has increased by 75percent (from 1965 to 1974) and are over one-half billion dollars. Frozen vegetable use (fresh weight basis) has risen (per capita consumption) from 17.4 pounds in 1965 to 20.9 pounds in 1974 -- an increase of 20 percent. But 1972-1973 sales of prepared vegetables (in sauces or cream) have decreased by 7 percent. Sale of French fries -- the leading processed food -- increased 131 percent from 1965 to 1975.

(Con't page 4)

CHANGING LIFESTYLES (CON'T)

The convenience food report by Economic Research Service showed that only 36 percent of the 162 processed foods studied had a comparative cost advantage over their nonprocessed food form. Over 80 percent of the "new generation" convenience foods were more expensive than preparing them from basic ingredients.

However, 16 single ingredient vegetable convenience products in frozen and canned forms were cheaper than their fresh or home-prepared counterparts.

Frozen orange juice concentrate remains the best orange juice buy. And -- during 1965-1974 the citrus fruit production increased by 67 percent, the result of the rising consumption of frozen orange juice concentrates.

Most of the highly processed meat dishes were more expensive than those prepared from the basic ingredients at home.

What's ahead? In the near future, highly processed foods could be packaged in flexible cooking pouches. This new type of packaging could reduce the number of frozen processed foods. Of course, less frozen food would eliminate much of the energy used in the food system because non-refrigerated trucks, and rail cars would be needed instead of refrigerated ones.

FOOD and HOME NOTES, a weekly newsletter directed to mass media outlets, is published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Communication, Washington, D.C. 20250. — Editor: Shirley Wagener...
Phone: 202-447-5898.
